







Official Journal of the

MINNESOTA TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM, INC.

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CIRCULATION

The *Minne gazette* is published quarterly by the Minnesota Transportation Museum, Inc., and is mailed to members in good standing without charge under Third Class postal permit. Members may request First Class Mailing for an additional \$5 per year charge.

SUBMISSIONS

The *Minne gazette* welcomes submissions for publication of articles, photos and other illustrative materials of historical interest relating to transportation in the Upper Midwest. No payment is made, and publication is at the editor's discretion.

MUSEUM PURPOSE

The Museum is a non-profit educational corporation organized in Minnesota in 1962 to preserve and communicate to the public the experience of Minnesota's surface public transportation history. It operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line and the Minnehaha Depot in Minneapolis, the Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul, the Osceola & St. Croix Valley Ry. in Osceola and the Steamboat Minnehaha in Excelsior.

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual	\$ 30	Family	\$ 40
Sustaining	\$ 50	Sponsor	\$ 100

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

-To Charles Barthold and Gannet Corporation for their matching donation to the Railroad, Traction and Jackson Street funds.

-To the Traction Annual Appeal donors (see list on page 5).

-To Bob Renz for the donation of paint removal products for PCC car #322.

-To Schear Brothers for donating doors for Jackson Street.

-To Maritz Marketing for donating 20 chairs for Jackson Street.

-To Bill Rose for donating an office furnace for Jackson Street.

-To Baldwin Metal Works for donating a metal lathe, spinning lathe, foundry and mill for Jackson Street.

-To MRL Manufacturing for donating a horizontal milling machine for Jackson Street.

-To Incstar Corporation for donating a sink, filing cabinet, four computers and two stools for Jackson Street.

-To Union Pacific for donating twelve 97-channel radios.

-To CP Rail for donating these items from Shoreham Shops for Jackson Street: five lounge chairs, the shop whistle, small tools, machine tools, wheel press and vertical lathe.

MTM RECEIVES PRESERVATION AWARD

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota has, for the second time, recognized MTM for its fine work in historic preservation. MTM had previously been recognized in 1994 for the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. This time the award is for the steamboat Minnehaha.

MTM Chair Michael E. Miller was one of several individuals who received awards for their personal contributions to preservation. The award was for his valiant effort to prevent the demolition of Ytterboe Hall on the campus of St. Olaf College, Miller's alma mater. He headed up the group that first stalled the demolition in court, and then raised funds to restore it. The court put them on a tight deadline and they fell just short of the funds needed. Once the injunction lapsed, the college wasted no time in demolishing the historic structure.

Front cover: In 1938, before public address systems, the Train Caller at the Minneapolis Great Northern Depot sings out the 10:15 departure of GN number 3.

Inside front cover: The gritty industrial Minneapolis of the past comes through in this November 9, 1937 photo. The camera is looking north from 9th Avenue S. and Washington Avenue toward the West Side milling district and the Milwaukee Depot. Both Minneapolis Star-Tribune photos, Minnesota Historical Society collection.

BOARD CHANGES

Because there were only two candidates for the two open seats on the Board of Trustees, the museum's bylaws permitted election by acclamation. The purpose of this clause is to prevent the needless expense of several hundred dollars and numerous volunteer hours on an uncontested election. Incumbents Mike Miller and Dick Fish were returned to office.

At its November meeting, the newly constituted Board elected officers. Mike Miller continues as Chair, Morten Jorgensen as Vice-Chair and Russell Olson as Treasurer. New to the position of Secretary is John Walker.

Appointed voting Trustees members are Bob Torkelson, Art Pew, John DeWitt and John Robinson. Non-voting Honorary Trustees are Heather Worthington, Al Lindquist, Dick Heine and Byron Olsen. Aaron Isaacs leaves the Board after 11 years of service.

OBITUARY

Robert H. Edenborg passed away on October 15, 1997. Retired from the Railway Mail Service, he was an active MTM volunteer on RPO car #1102 at Stillwater and Osceola. He guided visitors through the car and assisted in making catches "on the fly". Born in Duluth, he joined the United States Marines, with action during World War II in the South Pacific at Bougainville and Iwo Jima. He was combat wounded in 1945. After leaving the military, Bob became a Railway Mail Clerk working on the cars throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. After the end of RPO service, he became terminal manager at Wold Chamberlain airport. He eventually became Post Master of St. Paul.

-Lloyd Jackson

CORRECTION

The last Steamboat Report implied that the Excelsior trolley contractor, Widmer Construction, was responsible for the delay that resulted in the building permit lapsing. In fact the permit had lapsed before the job was let to Widmer. We regret the error.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

-Michael E. Miller

Reflections on a big year

MTM has its ups and downs, but 1997 was an up year by any measure. It's an extraordinary thing just to run a streetcar line, a railroad, a steamboat, a depot and various support and related activities. What a tribute to our volunteers that those considerable accomplishments are now considered routine, a starting point for additional growth. Major highlights of the season were that the Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway and the Steamboat Minnehaha carried record numbers of passengers and here are some of the extras we accomplished in 1997.

The ISTE A money began to flow in earnest. At Lake Harriet we used it to combine the carbarns into a single structure housing five cars instead of three, with a larger pit and improved entryways. We replaced 400 ties and partially rebuilt the pedestrian underpass.

At Jackson Street the ISTE A money built a new parking lot and public visitor entrance. It built offices and bathrooms, reopened the first stall in bay D, moved and restored the Rutledge depot, moved two passenger cars from the arsenal and reconfigured the Railroad Division offices and shop space.

At Excelsior it paid for the half mile long new trolley line and a two track yard for a new carbarn.

The accomplishments go beyond ISTE A, however. The Steamboat Division went through a major management shakeup and emerged stronger than before. The Minnehaha received a new canopy and the Excelsior trolley saw the operation of its first piece of restored rolling stock, one of the Valleyfair gas cars. The restoration of PCC #322 continued and it moved to Lake Harriet. Traction published the *Como-Harriet Story*, made significant progress on the TCRT video and created the first of several new visual displays. Jackson Street volunteers began working in earnest on the displays that will greet the first visitors next year. The Railroad Division made significant strides to firm up its organization, training and safety programs.

In the area of museum-wide management, **Russ Olson** has done a heroic job of realigning the museum's accounting, cash handling and financial reporting practices. When he is done, we'll be on a much sounder fiscal footing, with better accountability and procedures. **John Walker's** efforts to create a museum-wide phone system and e-mail presence have paid impressive dividends. Yes sir, it's been quite a year.

The big year to come

Barring something unexpected (which probably will happen), here's what I'm sure of for 1998.

We will make an agreement with the City of Stillwater to extend the lease of locomotive #328. The present 30-year lease expires in 2006. Given the need for an expensive overhaul, we need to know that we have a long term interest in the engine.

ISTE A work will begin on Railroad Division passenger cars, the first major cash investment in this equipment ever.

ISTE A improvements at Jackson Street will continue and it will be open to the public for the first time.

The ISTE A funded carbarn will be erected at Excelsior, and streetcar #1239 will move there from Jackson Street to begin restoration. Some public operation of the trolley line will begin.

PCC restoration will continue at a faster pace than before.

The Twin City Lines streetcar video will be on sale.

Going beyond the obvious and the certain, here are some things I hope will happen in 1998.

Based on a Museum-wide assessment of our management needs, a General Manager position will be filled to take

over some of the responsibilities that are becoming more than volunteer leadership can handle.

A new Volunteer Coordinator position will be filled. It will function as MTM's Personnel or Human Resources Department, creating personnel policy, and supervising the recruitment for all divisions.

A museum-wide ticketing, reservations and charter system will be up and running.

There will be museum-wide souvenir retailing, with common purchasing, inventory control, pricing and staffing.

An official MTM office will be established inside Jackson Street Roundhouse. Finally, when people ask, "Where's the museum?", we'll be able to give them an answer.

However, it is still the individual volunteer who makes all this happen—and that won't change. The job of those of us who are temporarily in a "management" role in the organization is to make the job of the volunteer easier and more enjoyable. Our primary responsibility is to create an environment that people look forward to being part of every time they shed the "real world" and take up their roles interpreting the great drama of transportation history.



The Minnehaha depot looked like this in the early 1960's, before MTM and the Minnesota Historical Society restored it. It was painted two-tone gray. MTM collection



ISTEA GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

Last issue described the recent ISTEAs applications made by MTM for the funding years 2001-2002. The good news is that the Excelsior trolley extension was successful. \$688,928 in federal dollars will be matched by \$172,232 in local funds. The trolley will be extended down Water Street and Lake Street, creating a continuous loop.

The bad news is that none of the other applications were successful. The Como-Harriet improvements missed being funded by one position. The restoration of vintage buses, Jackson Street grant 4, and the restoration of steam locomotive #328 and coaches all were rated low and had no chance. This is disturbing, because Como-Harriet, Jackson Street and railroad coaches had all previously been funded. It appears that some changes in the local ISTEAs rating criteria made the difference.

Chairman **Mike Miller** has appealed to the Metropolitan Council to revisit the ratings, arguing that historic preservation received less than its fair share of funding, and that projects begun with ISTEAs funds should receive some priority for additional funding to complete them.

MEMBER DUES INCREASE

For the first time since 1988, MTM member dues have increased. Individual memberships rise from \$25 to \$30. Family memberships go from \$30 to \$40. In addition, members requesting first class Minnegazette mailing pay \$6 instead of \$5. Notice to Steamboat Division members: In December you received an incorrect dues renewal notice with the old rates. If you already paid at the lower rate, please send in an extra \$5 or \$10, as appropriate.

The lion's share of member dues support the publication of the Minnegazette, along with the Member Directory, membership meetings, the annual Board of Trustees election, office supplies and the Museum's informational phone lines. Even with low inflation, all those things have grown more expensive over the last decade. Also, the Board would like to set some funds aside for organizational development, such as hiring a paid Volunteer Coordinator.



During the State Fair, #1300 and bus #1399 met at Lake Calhoun. Al Jensen photo.

TRACTION REPORT

-Louis Hoffman

Annual Appeal update

To date, we have received \$9425 from 82 persons and two foundations representing 62 memberships. In addition to those generous donors named in the last Minnegazette, new donors include **Roman F. Arnoldy**, **Charles Barthold** (matched by the Gannett Foundation), **Tom and Mary Beaumont**, **Douglas P. Beedon**, **John Cartwright**, **Harold A. Dalland**, **John F. Dillery**, **Jack Fitchette**, **Roger Gardner**, **Gary W. Gustafson**, **Sigmund Harris**, **Jim Harrison**, **Dewey Hassig**, **John Heintz**, **Aaron and Mona Isaacs**, **Al and Melanie Jensen**, **Jim Kreuzberger**, **Dick and Janice Levering**, **Scott E. Linsley**, **Michael E. Miller**, **Robert Mirick**, **Gary Neunsinger**, **Jeremy S. Nichols**, **John E. Nordale**, **Bill Olsen**, **Andrew Papulas**, **John and Kathy Prestholdt**, **Terry Shima**, **Clyde Stephens**, **Walt and Cori Strobel**, **Bruce Treichler**, **Jima and Jincy Vaitkunas**, **Chris and Heather Worthington**. Thanks to all of you who have given so far for your great generosity, especially those who did not request a premium allowing all of your donation to benefit the streetcar line.

This is a tremendous showing from those who contributed - but this grand amount still comes from not even ten percent of the total Museum membership - and nearly one fifth of the total has come from corporate matches. Just think how much we could do if everyone gave at least something?

How about it members and volunteers? Nearly 800 of you have yet to respond. We're close to raising \$10,000 - if only six members gave \$100 each, twelve members gave \$50 each, 23 members gave \$25 each, 58 gave \$10 each, or 115 gave \$5 each, we'd be there. It doesn't take big checks (but they're nice too) - it takes lots of them from a supportive membership.

1998 Traction Division survey

The 1998 Traction Division survey is included with this Minnegazette. If you've never volunteered, or if you have in the past but are currently inactive, please consider volunteering this year - there's something for everyone, and you don't need to give a lot of time or have a lot of talent. If you don't think you can help, give us a call - we'll find a job for you. A new need this year is for carbarn guides. We're planning to offer barn tours one evening per week, using little used #78 as a shuttle from the depot to the carbarn. If you can give one evening perhaps once per month, please consider volunteering for this exciting new program. All the training you'll need will be provided.

Time travel

Member **Scott E. Linsley**, now of Aberdeen, WA, wrote with these reminiscences of the Como-Harriet line: "My brother and I were raised as children on the Como-Harriet line at 1227 Como Boulevard until age 28 and later at 1269 Como Boulevard. TCRT provided electricity at 600 volts DC to Como Park with long black carbon rod



Como-Harriet's other intermodal link (besides the Metro Transit bus at Lake Calhoun) is the Park Board's Queen of the Lakes excursion boat. Aaron Isaacs photo.

arc lights. There was, in the summer time, band concerts every evening by the Albrecht Concert Band besides twice on Sundays and holidays. There was transportation by horse and very few automobiles, mainly streetcars, so people rode them for outings and fun in Como, Excelsior, Deephaven, Wildwood and of course, Harriet.

My father was a dentist and my mother a school teacher and another St. Paul dentist lived on Lake Minnetonka at Deephaven, so we sometimes took the high-speed streetcar to Deephaven. When I was in high school, I was a U.S. (mail) special delivery boy and rode the high speed Stillwater cars. In those days those cars were 3/4 full of U.S. mail sacks.

I rode the Como-Harriet for eight years straight going to high school and the U of M. In the third grade I rode the Como-Harriet or Como-Hopkins for an entire year going to Blake School on 22nd Street and Colfax Avenue South off of Hennepin Avenue. In the fourth and fifth grades I rode the Dale-Forest with a transfer to and from the Como-Harriet to St. Paul Academy at Dale and Portland."

Veteran and Vintage Transit

Time travel is possible, as has been noted in these pages, by simply visiting our museum's various exhibit sites - and by visiting other railway museums in North America. An invaluable guide to doing that is *Veteran and Vintage Transit*, billed as "a guide to North America's mass transit museums, tourist trolley operators and private mass transit collections. . . ." It was compiled by noted traction author and historian Andrew D. Young and has 106 pages and 33 photos (including one of TCRT #1267 undergoing restoration as the

Seashore Trolley Museum in Maine). It is available through the museum for \$23.00, including shipping. While not a large book, it is crammed full of detailed information. Send your check, payable to MTM, to V&VT Offer, MTM, P.O. Box 17240, Nokomis Station, Minneapolis, MN 55417-0240.

More donations

We've received more invaluable parts - a long seat bottom, a brass window pull, and a number of copies of the TCRT employee newsletters from the 1950's - from **Mrs. John P. Anderson**. Thank you for your generosity.

TCRT decals for modelers

Member **Forrest Johnson** of Big Bend, WI, has 15 complete sets of HO scale TCRT decals for Twin City Rapid Transit Company streetcars. Each set includes sufficient decals to letter both standard and PCC cars: TCRT logos and numbers, three sets of destination signs (black on white) for standard cars and one (white on black) for PCC's, "Enter Here" and "Entrance" signs for standards cars, and PCC headlight wings. Please contact Mr. Johnson if you are interested.

Halloween trolley

After several years of discussion, **Bill Graham** took the bull by the horns and organized the first annual Halloween trolley, running on Halloween evening with only last-minute publicity spearheaded by Bill and **Michael Sciortino**, we nonetheless managed to attract some 75 hardy souls who consumed several pounds of candy and gallons of cider. Thanks to the crew who joined Bill, including **Ben Exley** as the Grim Reaper. If you want to help next year, please give Bill a call.

The Halloween streetcar ran from 6 to 8 p.m. Members **Charles Cunningham**, **John DeWitt**, **Harold Dalland**, **Ben Exley**, **Dave Beaumont** and **Bill Graham** decked out the Linden Hills Depot with jack 'o lanterns. Car #1300, our only car with heaters, ran a regular schedule in pelting, cold rain. The young hob goblins and their parents reported having a good time. The scene inside the depot resembled a neighborhood party.

When #1300's ceiling lights are turned off, her headlight also goes out. The car ran northbound with lights on. When reaching (where else?) Lakewood Cemetery, the crews turned off the car lights and invited passengers to scan the dark tombstones for signs of spooks. When none were reported, the car returned south to Berry Bridge with lights still turned out. There in the gloom, the Grim Reaper boarded the car, moaned a bit and floated down the dark aisle before disappearing down the rear steps. Many passengers said they were so frightened that they needed to ride several times. Between runs, of course, Ben hung out under bridge by the cemetery fence in near total darkness - alone... He is a stout lad and reported that playing spook was kind of fun.



The Grim Reaper (Ben Exley) gives everyone aboard the first Halloween Trolley a good scare. John DeWitt photo.

General Services Department

Last September, the St. Paul Pioneer Press' **Don Boxmeyer** wrote an article about **Stanley Gordon West**, author of "Until They Bring the Streetcars Back." I sent a letter to the editor, pointing out that, at Lake Harriet at least, the streetcars were back. Not only did the Pioneer Press print the letter, complete with directions, fares, and schedules, but they set it off in a box, titled it "All Aboard!" and included a photo of #1300 emerging from beneath the William Berry Parkway bridge. Later, in conjunction with my letter reminding St. Paulites that streetcars are back at Lake Harriet, the Pioneer Press ran a large photo of #1300 northbound at the William Berry Parkway bridge.

The October Longfellow Nokomis Messenger featured an article reminiscing about the Lake Street of bygone days, including the Selby-Lake streetcar line. I responded in the November issue that although the Selby-Lake line was gone, one could still ride the big yellow cars of the Twin City Lines at Lake Harriet. It featured two color photos by **Bill Graham**.

Mechanical Department

This winter will be a low-key one at the carbarn. With the PCC taking up most of the space in the heated maintenance barn, work on the rest of the fleet will consist of doing things that can be removed from the car and worked on in the warmth of the maintenance barn. Once warm weather comes, crews still plan to install air pressure warning signals on the three air-braked cars. And, of course, each car will need its annual inspection prior to entering service. Crews won't be called over the winter, unless the usual denizens of the carbarn and casual walk-ins can't keep up with the work. If you want to help, please stop by on Wednesday evening or on most Saturday mornings. Please call Chief Mechanical Officer **John DeWitt** at 338-1871 for more details.

Motor Bus Department

With the possibility of receiving ISTEAFunds for motor bus restoration out of the question, the Motor Bus Department is looking for alternate ways to accomplish several relatively small but still not cheap tasks: painting 1962 GMC #198, now in transit red, into its as-delivered TCRT color scheme and rebuilding the engine of otherwise beautifully restored 1941 Mack #630. One of three 1954 GMC Model 5105s from Jackson Street may be moved to a Metro Transit facility by **Greg Whitney**

for evaluation and possible restoration; we hope it can be repainted into its as-delivered TCRT color scheme as well. The other two 5105s will finally be on their way to off-site storage next spring. These projects, all relatively modest in cost, could result in a fleet of four motor buses representing six decades of service, from 1941 when the Mack was delivered to TCRT to 1996 when the last 5303 was retired by MCTO. With the planned disposition of AM General #1488 (more on this later), that leaves the Rochester Yellow coach remaining at Jackson Street for restoration. The Division decided to deaccession and sell #1488 because of its decrepit condition (a bad frame and few intact windows for starters), making it a poor candidate for restoration. Its parts can be sold or traded for the money and parts needed to maintain and restore the remainder of the fleet.

Physical Plant Department

In what I hope to be the final report on the now-completed ISTEAFunded work, **Keith Lindberg** has completed several thousand dollars' worth of interior finishing work necessitated by the carbarn expansion. Keith spent many long days at the carbarn, saving the Traction Fund untold dollars it can't afford. Thanks, Keith for all your hard work.

What did we accomplish? See **George Isaacs'** project summary on the next page. Electric lighting returned to the tunnel and the Park Board repaired and painted the railings (although more work needs to be done in this area). Our second ISTEAF application was not approved. That means we have to raise the money needed to install about 2,100 ties, and the sooner the better. At \$60 per tie, that's \$126,000. Yet another reason to give generously to the Annual Appeal.

There are other things happening around the property as well. Crews have cut back brush, whose growth has been spurred by last summer's ample rains. More than a dozen ties in the north siding switch, some as long as 16 feet, have been changed out. A special thanks to **Joel Gensler** for the loan of his Bobcat. Aside from a little tweaking here and there, **Bill Cordes**, **Scott Heiderich**, and **Mike Miller** have completed reinstallation of the overhead wire in the carbarn and yard limit. You'll notice the Depot looks a little fresher. Last fall, **Karl Jones** touched up the paint. **Tom DeYoung** and Boy Scout Troop #64 of Richfield built a beautiful retaining wall outside of the east wall of the south carbarn extension to replace the one that collapsed. And the walk under the Linden Hills Boulevard bridge is smother thanks to the always

indispensable **Roy Harvey**, who re-set the bricks last fall. Roy also built a splendid catch basin for drainage on the west side of the carbarn.

After innumerable years and thousands of hours of work, Roy has also stepped down from his foreman and supervisory roles in the Physical Plant Department. He'll continue to oversee carbarn and depot upkeep and will be our main man for charter operations. As our leading volunteer in number of hours worked - by far - year after year, not to mention his generous financial support which was matched by the US West Foundation, the Traction Division owes a great deal to Roy. Thanks, Roy, for all your work.

You've no doubt noticed how many of the names in the report appear in every report - and how few new names appear. How about doing something about it - volunteer! The 1998 Traction Division survey is included with this Minnegazette. How about giving your Como-Harriet Streetcar Line even just a few hours this season? It's not all heavy work - you can tend the garden or mow the lawn, for example, and you don't need specialized skills, just a morning or two or three and the willingness to learn a little and sweat a little. Thanks to **Scott Heiderich** for contributing to this report.

Transportation Department

Ridership in 1997 was dismal. The second rainiest July in recorded history, combined with massive park construction commencing on July 28 and continuing for the rest of the season, resulted in our worst season yet - only 32,339 passengers. On thirteen days, rain was recorded as the cause for low ridership; the list isn't complete. We were also hindered by construction on our line for three evenings as well as one power outage. Of the total, 30,885 rode regular streetcars and 1,484 rode chartered streetcars. By car, 14,020 rode #1300, 14,281 rode #265, and 198 rode #78. The total number of passengers carried in 27 years is 1,164,375.

We hope that these dismal figures are an aberration and that, with the new improved park facilities at Lake Harriet (and a little warm, dry weather), ridership will rebound. But until it does, the Traction Fund, although solvent and holding its own, is strapped for cash. If you haven't yet given, please consider a donation to the Annual Appeal.

Where did these folks come from? The visitors register in the depot tells all. Our guests came from 26 states, two Canadian provinces, and nine other

Traction Ridership 1997

	Total Passengers	Regular	Tokens	Trips	Passengers Per trip	Charter
May	5,034	4,879	3,486	279	17.5	155
June	8,306	7,881	5,619	449	17.6	425
July	8,587	8,112	6,028	450	18.0	475
August	6,572	6,380	4,442	420	15.2	192
<u>Sept. Oct</u>	<u>3,840</u>	<u>3,603</u>	<u>2,469</u>	<u>309</u>	<u>11.7</u>	<u>237</u>
Totals	32,339	30,855	22,044	1907	16.2	1484

foreign countries, including Australia, Brazil, Germany, Israel, Slovene, South Africa, South Korea, and the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, but no one from Wales). This is what they said: "Exceptional. . . The volunteers do a great job!" First trolley ride for 1 and 3 years olds." Thanks for your dedication." "It's still wonderful!" "Perfect." "Pretty Cool." Just like I remember!" "Nice Hats." "It's a part of summer!" "Yahoo. . . Whee!" "All enjoyed - wish was longer." "You're doing a great job!" "I used to ride the line to the State Fair." Thanks to **John and Kathy Prestholdt** for contributing to this report.

Minnehaha Depot

Last September, my son Ben and I stopped in at the Princess around supper time on a Sunday evening. The windows were all shuttered and only one door was open. The Depot had been closed for several weeks. However, during the one hour we were there, 19 people stopped in, made donations, and bought some souvenirs. It was thoroughly enjoyable, having the chance to visit with people genuinely interested in the building's long and fascinating history.

Just think of how well we could do with this gem of an exhibit if it were open more often? When you fill out your Traction Division Survey, why not check the Minnehaha Depot box? It's a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon. Bring a spouse or a friend. And if enough of you help, it can be opened on Saturday afternoons as well.

Streetcar trucks arrive from Japan

Most members were not aware of it, but MTM has been working for several months to procure three pairs of motorized streetcar trucks from Japan. All were built by American manufacturers and shipped to the Osaka transit system in the 1920's. They

were well maintained and are ready to run. And the best part of it is that they were donated. MTM only had to pay the cost of shipping, about \$25,000.

As the Steamboat Division found out when they went looking for trucks several years ago, they are extremely rare. They were able to buy a pair of Japanese built trucks that don't really look much like anything American, and an unpowered pair of Melbourne W-2 trucks that look like Baldwins. Those two pair cost \$30,000.

The three new pairs include one Brill 27-E, and two Baldwin 75's. The Brills are very close to those used under TCRT wood underframe cars built as late as 1904. As we go to press, the plan is to put the Brills under #265, and #265's trucks under to-be-restored #1329. The Baldwins, with their distinctive curved equalizers, are a very close match to the original trucks under Mesaba Railway #10. They have a 75 inch wheelbase compared to the original trucks which were 78 inches. It is now possible to consider restoring #10, which has been sitting in a building at the New Brighton Arsenal for almost 20 years. In order to recoup the cost of shipping the trucks, the second pair of Baldwins will be sold.

ISTEA work complete

-George Isaacs

It is all over but the shouting and there may be more of that. The 400 new ties are installed, the two pedestrian underpass lights are working, the reduced scope of the concrete work at the underpass is finished, the car barn expansion completed, and the collapsed retaining wall behind the car barn rebuilt.

It took a little over a year from the time construction started in October 1996 to do the entire job. The adverse winter, a vendor foul-up, coordinating with operations and a subcontractor's foot dragging stretched things out. We are slowly organizing our shop and parts storage to re-attain the clean shop image we are noted for.

That is the good news, now for the bad news. The winning bid by Metro Building Systems for the entire project was \$144,000, which was \$5000 under the grant limit of \$150,000. The Traction Division had set aside \$30,000 as its 20 percent local share. It wasn't enough. All told our share plus additional expenses incurred to completed the project totaled \$46,260.

The lesson we learned from this grant is that ISTEA requires more than a 20 percent match (ours was 24.3 percent). We also learned that ISTEA is a difficult process heavy on paperwork and bureaucracy. It's no fun.

It took a lot of work by a dedicated group of members to make this happen. Also many thanks to the Boy Scout troop, its project leaders and parents for the fine tie retaining wall. Thus ends my role as ISTEA Chair.

RAILROAD REPORT

-Erik Brom and Dick Kolter

No matter how you look at it, all indications point to the 1997 operating season as being very successful. The leading indicator, number of passengers, was higher than in any past year. Over 30,000 people rode on our trains. There weren't any major mechanical problems or accidents and even the weather gave us mostly good days. The steam operations in August went very well, highlighted by the visit of Soo Line 2-8-2 #1003. The fall color season, as usual, was the busiest time of the year. This year many trips were completely sold out. The "Store on Rails", organized by **Charles Barthold**, also had a very successful season. The store operates on all trains, as well as in the baggage room of the depot.

The annual business meeting and election of the Railroad Division was held on November 15 at the Jackson Street Roundhouse. **Nick Modders** was re-elected as General Superintendent and **Eric Hopp** was given a seat on the board of directors. **Dick Fish** reported that income for the year was \$231,522 and that about half of that amount remained to do the necessary work during the winter. He reported this to be the best financial condition in a long time. **Pat Kytola** said that the total of 30,067 passengers this year was 4863 more than last year with the average ticket bringing in \$7.28.

In a very good season not everything goes well. It was reported at the annual meeting that just a few day earlier vandals had left a trail of damaged equipment in the yard around the



On September 1st #328 hauled freight on its way back to St. Paul. The two log cars were picked up in Dresser and dropped at Withrow. Bill Graham photo.

roundhouse. It seems the #A-11 suffered the most with much glass damage. General Electric switcher NSP #5 and a caboose also were damaged. Insurance will cover much of the costs but an effort will have to be made to minimize the possibility of it happening again.

On December 5 a volunteer appreciation banquet was held at Hafner's in St. Paul to honor everyone who has volunteered during this season and to give special recognition to those individuals who put in a large amount of time and effort for the Railroad Division. 98 volunteers and their guests attended. Everyone was given a wonderful meal and each volunteer received a polo shirt with the O&StCV logo. The following members received plaque awards: **Larry Schulte, John Schillberg, Marv Mahre, Ward Gilkerson, and Richard Kasseth.** The following people received certificates: **Jan Edstrom, Charles Barthold, Larry Kytola, Betty Ellingson, Mike Alfveby, Tim Tuggle, Eric Hopp.** We also presented a couple of fun awards with **Zell Olson** receiving the Mr. Congeniality award and **Phil Wellman** receiving the Junior Achievement award. It is hoped that this will be an annual event.

Special donations also help the division operate. A big thank you to the most recent:

Zell Olson's company, **Schear Brothers**, donated doors that will be used in the roundhouse.

Maritz Marketing, through **Fred Dalleska**, donated 20+ chairs for use in the lunchroom at the roundhouse.

Todd McGonagle donated babbitt for cross heads, and new molds for casting arch brick for #328.

Charles Marks is making a pair of wrenches for the lubricator, and lubricator fittings.

Bill Rose donated and installed a furnace for the office at the roundhouse.

Dave Wantz, through **Baldwin Metal Works** and **MRL Manufacturing**, donated a metal lathe, spinning lathe, and a horizontal milling machine.

Eric Hopp's company, **Incstar**, donated a sink, filing cabinet, four computers, and two stools.

Union Pacific donated twelve 97 channel radios.

Metro Transit donated a shear and brake, jump shear, and chains.

CP Rail donated, from the Shoreham shops: five lounge chairs, shop whistle,

small tools, machine tools, a wheel press for driver work, and a vertical lathe.

Arrangements were made by **Steve White** of WC to get 50 tons of ballast to the Gas Spur in Osceola.

As in past winters, this year there is much work going on at the roundhouse to maintain and improve the rolling stock. Trainmaster **Dick Heine** has gotten an early start in the planned work on the Rock Island coaches. Through his efforts in promoting the work the cars will have a new lighting system. New gates and diaphragms are also planned for these cars. Of course much routine work, especially on the locomotives will also be done. **Paul Dalleska** has been working on some of the details to improve the toilet situation on the trains. This is a difficult and expensive project partly because the current regulations which we have to follow were not in effect when our equipment was manufactured and changes are necessary. There is always opportunity for additional volunteers to get involved, please come down to Jackson Street Roundhouse any Thursday night or Saturday. No special skill is necessary, and any skills you have will be put to use.



This was the first year #328 ran regularly to Marine. There are no turning facilities so the return trip to Osceola was made tender first. Dick Heine photo.

The Railroad Division normally conducts classroom training on the General Code of Rules every other winter. This is required to obtain, or retain, your qualification to operate. This is an off year, but an opportunity is being made available for members who are not qualified to get involved. **Morten Jorgensen** is organizing a self study class. This will be held on a few Saturday mornings starting in February at Jackson Street Roundhouse (before heading for the maintenance tasks at hand). Please contact Morten ASAP at (612) 771-9970 (9AM to 9PM only) if you are interested. After having passed the code test you will be ready for the "Hands On Class" on May 2nd and then it's out to the "big" trains and a new season.

Freight operations have been steady during the last part of 1996 but the volume is not as great for this year as in some past periods. Another step in the abandonment of the track from Dresser to Amery was made this fall when the Wisconsin Central officially listed the line as "Out of Service". It is still usable but now if there is any traffic to go on it an inspection will be necessary first and speed will be reduced.

Tim Tuggle has found a source of plastic covers for conductor caps. These should work equally well for other similar types of caps. He is putting together a group purchase. Contact Tim at (715) 483-1767 for more details.

Crew schedules as well as much other important and interesting information is communicated to the Railroad Division members monthly in our newsletter, the MTM Semaphore. This is edited by **Erik Brom** and **Dick Kolter**, with contributions by many members.

Thanks to member **Mike Coffey**, who is also Assistant Principal of St. Paul's new Arlington High School,

MTM is in the railroader education business. Formally called the "Railroad History and Occupations" class, it offers students hands-on training with real rail equipment at Jackson Street Roundhouse. The course combines a history credit with vocational training and community service, all requirements of the state's new graduation rule. On completion of the course, students will be qualified to work on the O&StCV, and hopefully some will choose to do so. The St. Paul Pioneer Press reported on the program in its December 1st issue.

JACKSON STREET ROUNDHOUSE REPORT

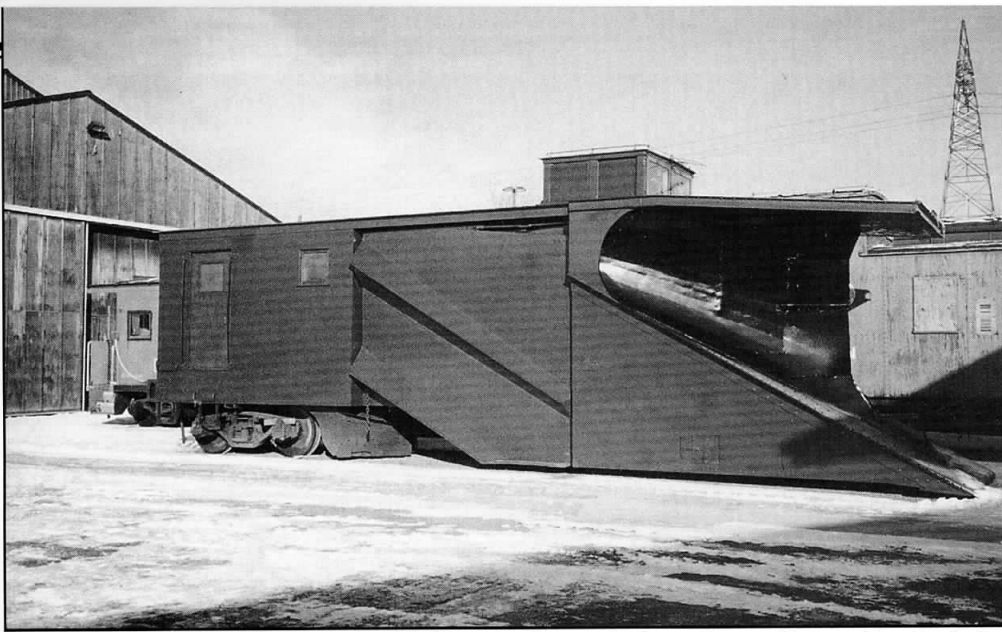
-George Bergh and Eric Hopp

The first phase of ISTE 1 construction at the Jackson Street Roundhouse has been completed. Museum exhibits are being developed for installation and display in the "high bay", Bay D. Our projected plan is to open the Jackson Street Museum doors to the public, on a limited basis, this spring or early summer, at a date yet to be determined.

The Golden Spike Ceremony, the official ground breaking ceremony for the Jackson Street Roundhouse Museum, took place on October 7, 1997. Guest speakers included St. Paul Mayor **Norm Coleman**, Roundhouse Superintendent **Art Pew**, MTM President **Mike Miller**, and **Louis F. Hill** representing the J.J. Hill Family. The Mayor presented a proclamation declaring October 7, 1997 to be Jackson Street Roundhouse Day in

Osceola & St. Croix Valley Ridership

	1997	1996
Walk up passengers	19,403	15,189
Marine	14,300	11,476
Dresser	4378	3285
Cedar Bend	725	
Charters	7690	6649
Specials	2974	
Reading is Fundamental (Amery)	932	
Fireworks Express (Amery)	443	380
High Bridge-Low Bridge (New Richmond)	305	266
New Richmond shuttle	320	
Romance on Rails	51	
Cat Tail Special	187	280
Wayzata		587
Anderson Picnic (Bayport)	1604	1468
Lumberjack Days (Stillwater)		635
Amery Fall Festival	173	130
Volunteer Trip	53	
Funeral Trip- Roy Minnick	28	
Fall Leaf Watchers Special	253	
Totals	30,067	25,204



The recently repainted Northern Pacific Russell plow at Jackson Street. George Bergh photo.

the City of St. Paul. The festivities took place in a tent in front of the power house. Following the speeches, the guest speakers and Project Manager **Wanda Sims** took turns driving a "golden spike" into the DSS&A #1474's display track. Following the ceremony, guests toured Bay D where cake and refreshments were served, while a musician played classic railroad themes. Blueprints, pictures, and models were displayed. News coverage was presented by three major local television stations and the Minneapolis and St. Paul newspapers. The day was a wonderful success. Our thanks go to **John Robinson** for coordinating the gala event. The colorful Jackson Street Roundhouse banner was donated by our neighbor, Signdesign, Inc. as coordinated by **Jeff Edington** and **Rick Heir**. The Mayor's Proclamation, the ceremonial spike and spiking maul are on display at Jackson Street.

The first phase of the JSRH construction project has brought major change to the roundhouse. With the approximate \$700,000 of ISTE A 1 funding, very significant private gifts and MTM volunteer labor, much has been accomplished. Outside, the east side of the building shows the most visible change. The old parking lot was torn up and paved, and a new separation sewer drainage system together with new curb and gutter was installed. Following grading, volunteers installed two eighty foot panel display tracks east of the power house. Then ballasting was donated. Two passenger cars, Rock Island coach #2529 and Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic wood RPO car #1474, were moved by truck from the Arsenal to the Jackson Street site and placed on the new display panel tracks. The exteriors of these cars will be

restored with the help of St. Paul Cultural Star grants and matching private funds, and the cars will function in the early phases of the museum as meeting or lecture locations with displays and as a picnic lunch car. The Rutledge Depot was relocated to the eastern edge of the property and received new windows, a new roof, chimney, new siding, and a new painted exterior. The roundhouse received a new main entrance, steps, and handicap accessible ramps. The cement block walls on each end of the loading dock were trimmed down, and the exterior wall of Bay C was rebuilt and resurfaced.

Inside Bay D, all the windows have been rebuilt or restored. A heated public restroom has been built in the west rooms. Cement fill originally installed by the Post Office was removed from the center stall, track 23, and rails relaid by volunteers. MRL Manufacturing donated labor to cut bar stock for making new rail clips, as arranged by **Dave Wantz**. The sprinkler system was modified and tested, and a new fire alarm system installed. A temporary corridor was built through Bay C to connect the new public entrance to Bay D. Because the existing ramp was too steep for wheelchairs, a longer ramp was installed over the old ramp.

On the west side of the roundhouse, new concrete sidewalks were laid around the four tracks located between the shed and the roundhouse, and a handicap accessible ramp was installed from the Bay D level to ground level. The parking lot was graded to eliminate ice build up at the shed doorway, and a new sewer catch basin installed. The light tower by the Jackson Street Bridge has been re-electrified.

As of this writing, the east entrance steps, the handicapped accessible

ramps, the main entrance door, and the new perimeter fence had not been installed, but these items should be in place when you read this article. Also to correct an error in the Fall issue, missing lights in Bay D were replaced by new lights, not lights scavenged from Bays C and D as stated.

Exhibit development is underway with guidance of **Noel Petit**. A newly formed museum group, the Jackson Street Roundhouse Museum Associates, under the leadership of **Bill Marshall**, will assist in the development of exhibits and establish a docent program. Organizational meetings will begin in January 1998. The business car *Grand Marais* or *Gopher*, was originally scheduled to be moved into track 23 of Bay D for display purposes. However, the car proved to be too long to move through the Post Office-built garage with its many support columns.

As an alternative, Northern Pacific wood caboose #1631 which has spent the last several years in Osceola, was moved recently into track 23. Although in need of paint and some exterior woodwork, #1631 was restored about 1980 and is in generally good shape. The NP Russell Snow plow has been sandblasted and painted in the Northern Pacific mineral red color and is spotted on display track on the west side of the roundhouse. The snow plow interior will be available for public viewing. The scale model of the Rock Island Twin Star Rocket has been moved into Bay D as part of a passenger train exhibit.

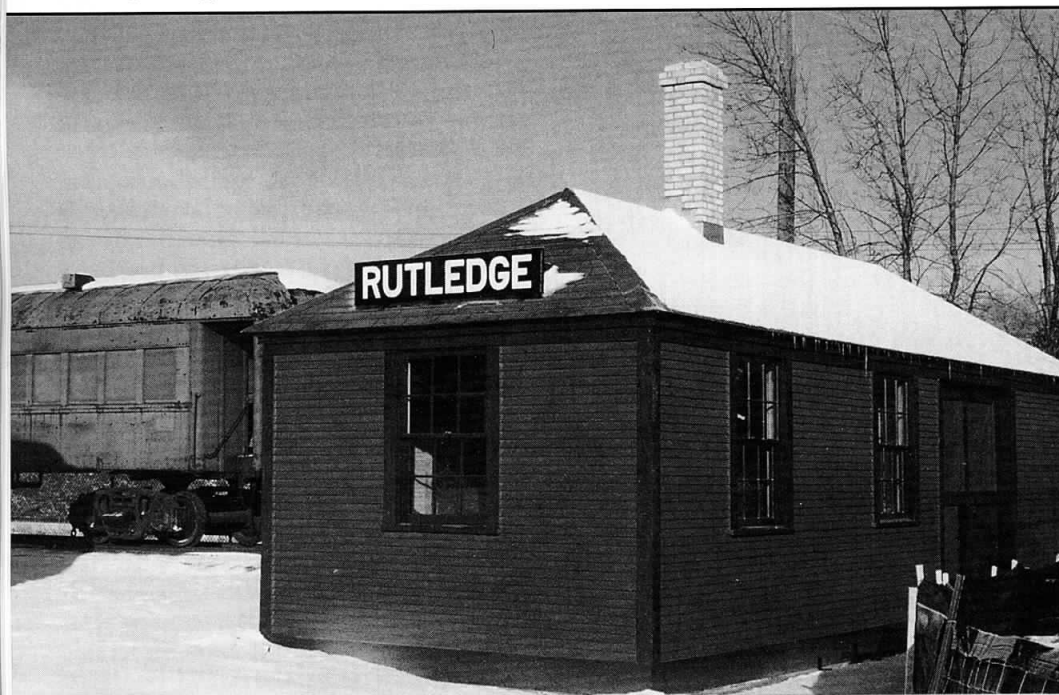
With ISTE A 1 completed, the architectural planning and development for ISTE A 2 and 3 will begin in the early part of 1998. This phase will tentatively include heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and preparation for turntable installation with some track installation. Sadly, the ISTE A 4 application was rejected for this round.

A new function for Jackson Street has been authorized by the MTM Board of Trustees. At the November Board meeting the recommendation was made to begin the establishment of permanent office space for MTM administration at the Jackson Street Roundhouse.

At the Railroad Division Board meeting on November 15, **Eric Hopp** was elected to the board replacing **John Coughlin**. **John Robinson** gave an update on Jackson Street and how ISTE A 1 was nearly completed and commented on the significant work and effort contributed by so many people to launch the project. Now that the Railroad Division has been able to



Makeover of the month. The Rutledge Depot was moved to its new site on the east side of the property, where the exterior was fully restored. Behind it is Rock Island coach #2529, recently brought to Jackson Street from the arsenal. George Bergh photos.



occupy a significant part of the original roundhouse in preparation for moving out of the garage area, there is now a new and improved working relationship between the operational railroad museum and the Jackson Street museum. Superintendent Modders appointed a Jackson Street Steering Committee to assist and offer direction as the Roundhouse moves into the next stage of planning, development, and construction. Membership included Nick Modders, Art Pew, John Robinson, Noel Petit, George Bergh, Paul Dalleska, and Debbie Wood.

In the developing shop and office area of Bay A, work is progressing under the guidance of **Paul Dalleska**. New office space has been constructed. **Bill Rose** donated and installed a new office furnace. The relocated machine shop in Bay A is being organized with the help of **Dave Wantz**. Numerous volunteers have contributed immensely with the construction and equipment moving.

The future location of a heated wood shop in Jackson Street is being studied. Car restoration, museum projects, and possible roundhouse door construction are projects needing a wood shop. The

space will be developed the first part of 1998.

Congressman **Jim Oberstar** visited the Jackson Street Roundhouse on Saturday, November 22, 1997. Oberstar is the ranking Democrat on the House Transportation Committee. **Wanda Sims** presented the past, present and future plans for the MTM Jackson Street Roundhouse, and he toured the round-house viewing projects and volunteers in action.

The Roundhouse Project continues to move steadily forward. What an exciting time! Our thanks again to our **Art Pew** and **Wanda Sims**, and the many volunteers who donate their time, energy and resources to move this marvelous project forward.

THE ORIGINS OF GREAT NORTHERN #A-11

MTM Great Northern business car #A-11 has been rebuilt and renumbered enough times that its origins are obscure. Now, thanks to the recent publication of Great Northern Railway Historical Society Reference Sheet No. 256, the full story of #A-11 can be told.

It was built by Barney & Smith in 1911 as #9021, part of a 25 car order for compartment-observation cars. It was built of wood, with arched windows. The interior consisted of four compartments, a small buffet, a smoking room and a fifteen seat observation lounge. The door to the open rear platform was offset, leaving room for a large arched rear window.

In 1922, some of the cars apparently became surplus, replaced by steel equipment. #9021 was rebuilt into business car #A-1, the second to carry that number. The car kept its short (11 foot 3 inch) observation room. One of the original four compartments was replaced with a kitchen and pantry. Two "staterooms" were constructed in place of the smoking room. The car received a steel underframe and front vestibule.

Steel sheathing was applied over the wood exterior in 1924. Perhaps the arched windows were covered over at that time. A heavier "fish belly" underframe was added in 1930. In 1938 the car was air conditioned.

In 1957 it was rebuilt again as #A-11. That is probably when the railroad roof was replaced with an arched roof, the brass railed observation platform was converted to solid steel panels, and a centered rear door replaced the off set door.



This is the new visitors entrance on the roundhouse's east side as of November. The door has yet to be installed. George Bergh photos.

The car was renumbered to #A-6 in 1969, and finally #B-7 in 1971. This final assignment took it out of the business fleet. It became the COMPASS (Computer Assisted Car Tracking System) Training Car. The observation lounge was extended to almost half the length of the car, and it received the pair of Super Dome trucks it has today. Finally retired, it was donated to MTM in 1982.

The Ground Breaking ceremony took place on October 7th.

EXCELSIOR REPORT

- Bill Graham

Winter work

Boat crew volunteers pulled Minnehaha from the water on October 3rd. Jeff Jensen's tank retriever performed effortlessly as usual. With on board tanks drained, boat and trailer were weighed using "bathroom" style

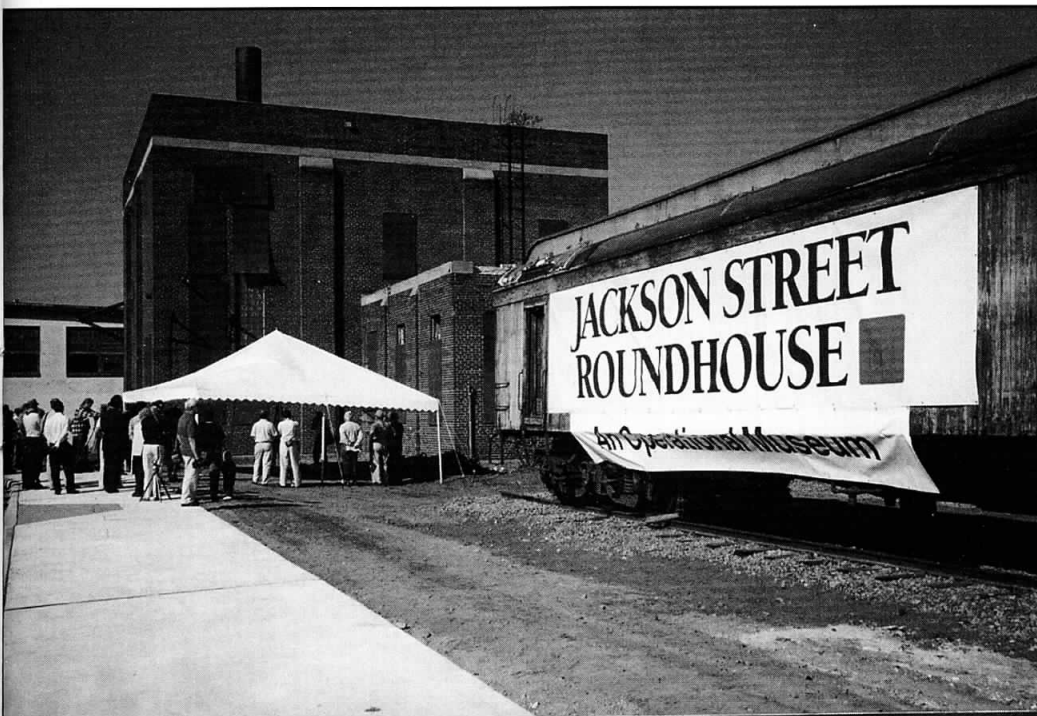
truck scales borrowed from the City of Excelsior. Her hull planks were well soaked, and Minnehaha weighed in at an eye popping 108,000 pounds, a full 19 tons heavier than anyone had thought. Small wonder that she rides steady as Gibraltar in a strong cross wind with a full load on her upper deck. MTM's marine architect will use this new weight figure to calculate stability after the new upper deck canopy is fully installed. The extra six tons of lead which he had called for might not be needed after all.

This Fall, boilerman **Virgil Buhanek** again has inspected and cleaned the boiler and steam pipe systems. He found no dirt or debris thanks to last winter's improvements to the oil firing system and packing glands. Virgil invited the State of Minnesota boiler inspector's office to inspect the system using a miniature TV camera. This turned up no flaws or problems. He continues adding valves and piping at critical locations to help cut down on periodic maintenance in the future.

Leo Eiden and **Jim Hewett** disassembled and inspected parts of the triple-expansion steam engine and found no serious problems. The boiler and engine performed exceptionally well this past operating season, a tribute to the skills of the many MTM'ers who contributed their knowledge and effort to creating it. Jim reports that volunteer engineers put in 1,100 person hours during the 1997 season. Laurels go to **John Titterington**, **Neal Heminger** and **Brad Blasing** for the most volunteer engineer hours for the season. Thanks to everyone for helping keep Minnehaha's boiler hot and her propeller turning this season.

Several elderly passengers have remarked at how much cleaner the Minnehaha is today than they remember TCRT's boats in the 1920's. One gentleman said, as a child, he remembered the decks, seats, railings and window sills coated with soot so that passengers had to protect clothing from the filth. Coal dust from the bunkers wafted about the cabin as the engineer shoveled it into the boiler, and upper deck passengers were bathed in cinders and coal smoke. Today's oil-fired boiler and condensing exhaust system means that the only residue on the window sills is likely to be Coppertone Sunblock No. 15.

Pete Weir and **Dave Cochran** and others re-insulated the recently raised ceiling of the boat building. New, rigid foam insulation board was installed, overlain with the old spun glass insulation from the previous ceiling.





On June 13th Minnehaha became the first streetcar boat to dock at Spring Park in 71 years. This is the approximate location of the Hotel Del Otero, one of the great Lake Minnetonka resorts. Captain Marsh Gabriel looks her over. Nancy Nervig photo.

The building now is tighter and warmer than ever.

Dave Irey, Fraser Morse, Doug Hultgren, George Ittner and Bernie Hahn are working on final finishing of single truck car No. 1 in preparation for next season. Some further painting and varnishing is needed, and new controls are being added to let the motorman adjust the engine speed from either operating platform. A power assist is being added to the hydraulic brake

system to ease the motorman's job of stopping the car. Bob Dumas has begun work on the overhaul of single trucker No. 2 which is planned to be electric-powered.

The division hopes that the carbarn can be built without further delay and be ready for occupancy by early Spring. This will allow the overhaul of TCRT #1239 to begin, a task expected to be complete in around three years. This car will be the flagship of the Excelsior

streetcar line and its authentic link to the original Lake Minnetonka Division of Twin City Lines. When finished, #1239 will be a spectacular exhibit with wire gates and an open rear platform.

Volunteers make it happen

Training manager **Ross McGlasson** welcomes the large cohort of new volunteers who joined in the Steamboat Division's programs in 1997. They worked in maintenance and crewing, office staffing and community outreach, problem solving and planning. Last season, we had enough volunteers to give the old hands some deserved rest. New people bring new ideas and enthusiasm to the program and make it more enjoyable for everyone. New faces are always welcome, and this winter, they are needed for the following tasks:

- Scrape, recaulk and paint the Minnehaha's hull.
- Refinish the upper deck benches.
- Repair damage to the smoke stack from collision with the Narrows bridge.
- Staff and remodel Division offices.
- Painting, carpentry and mechanical work at the Clark Oil building off Morse Street in Excelsior.

Training programs for new boat crew members will begin in February. **Bill Berger** and **Jim Larson** will conduct steam classes for new engineers leading to their receiving a state boiler operator's license and training on board the Minnehaha. **Ross McGlasson** will train new pilots who also must obtain a Coast Guard license and complete on board training. **John Marty** will train new pursers. MTM'ers wishing to tour the Excelsior facilities and possibly to spend sunny summer afternoons on board Minnehaha should contact **Lori Hammond** for details at 474-2115.

The division offered free MTM member cruises on October 4. Departing from the MTM dock, Minnehaha made four one-hour cruises around Big Island serving cider and cookies. Many MTM members attended, and member cruises again will be offered in mid-May, 1998. Watch for a mailing with details.

Organizational notes

Treasurer **Russ Olson** reports that Minnehaha ticket and merchandise sales revenue totaled \$70,167 for the 1997 operating season. Grants, donations and interest income added \$57,809 to the total. These figures are preliminary. A

complete financial summary will be available at the end of the fiscal year which ends May 31.

On November 29, twenty MTM'ers turned out to move the Steamboat Division's offices to a new location in downtown Excelsior at the foot of Water Street opposite the public dock. All of the division's stock of merchandise, furniture, artifacts and office equipment now are consolidated at this new location. Volunteers are replacing worn out carpeting and building new shelves and fixtures. The new location is nearer to the division's centers of activity and it has better public visibility. The new address is:

MTM Streetcar Steamboat Division
328 Lake Street, Excelsior, MN 55331
(612) 474-2115

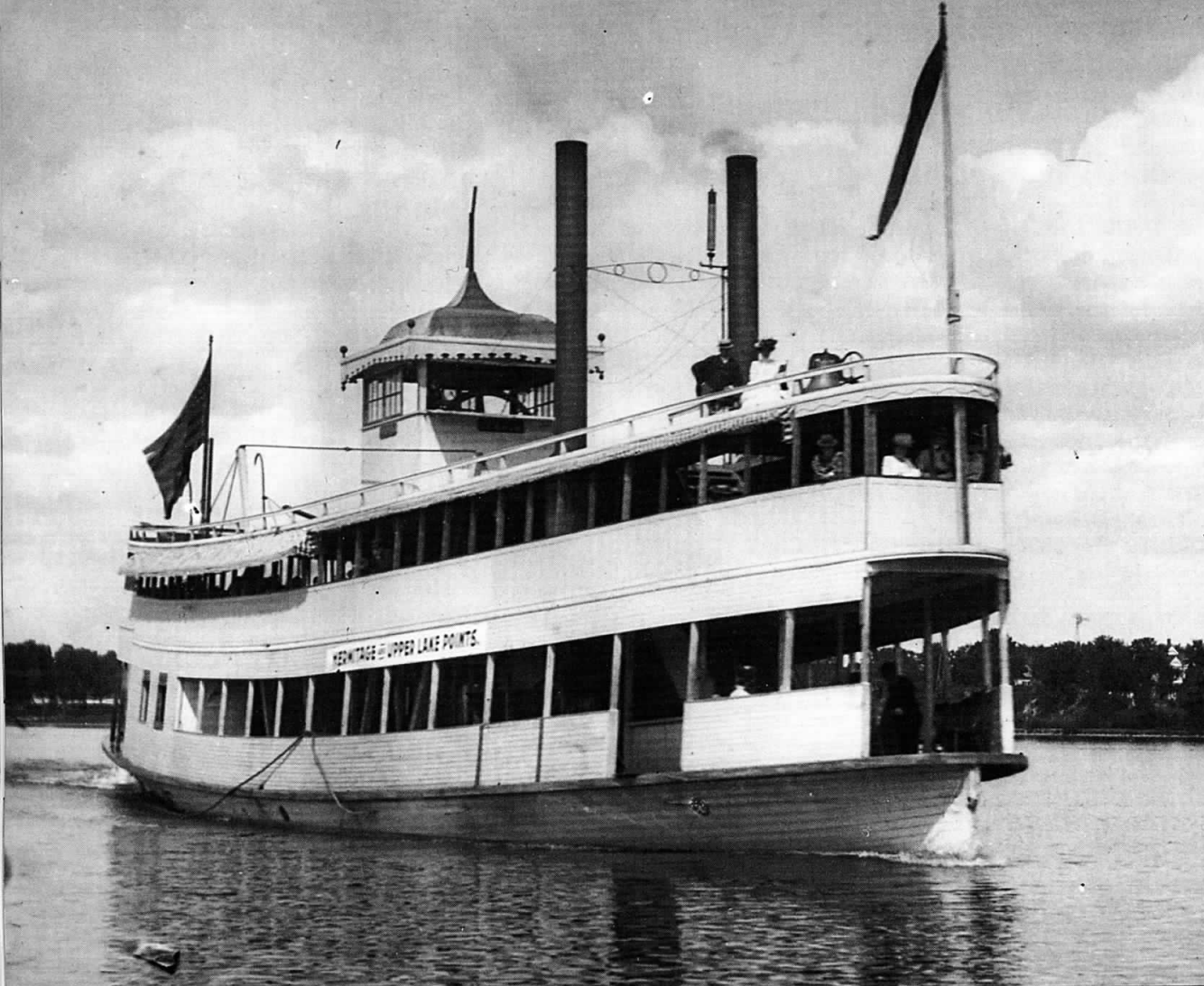
At Thanksgiving, a fund-raising letter was mailed to 5,000 potential contributors asking support of the boat and trolley programs. Despite good boat ridership this summer, more revenue is needed to cover capital expenses for improvements to the boat building, completion of the streetcar barn, equipment maintenance and the expected move of #1239 to Excelsior next Spring.

The annual Spring fundraiser is planned for Saturday, April 4 at the Lafayette Club in Orono. Volunteers are needed to help plan and stage this event. Donations of goods and services are needed for prizes to be raffled at this event which has raised a substantial share of the division's annual budget over the past four years.

Discussions continue with city officials over design of the new carbarn and improvements to the boat building required under the city's conditional use permit. At the end of 1997, city staff and council members had not determined their preferences for the appearance and long term future of the boat and carbarn buildings needed to support MTM's Lake Minnetonka programs. Representatives of the Hennepin County Parks department walked the new streetcar line to assess the potential for conflicts between streetcars and pedestrians on the adjacent trail. They will visit the site again next Spring to ride the car and consider the need for a barrier between the track and trail.

Minnehaha glides up to the Wayzata dock in July 1997. Crews must use extreme caution when approaching any dock, to avoid unwanted impacts. The pilot and engineer must work as one to keep the boat under proper control. Art Alberg photo.





Left: The George as originally built. Minneapolis Public Library collection.

Right: A few years and a change of ownership separate these two views of the Excelsior with the Puritan.

Below right: The Excelsior is owned by the W & E Line and still sports its long whistle. The Puritan is still working for Lake Minnetonka Transportation. Below: Both boats are now part of the TCRT fleet. Note the destination sign, shorter whistle and all white paint on the Excelsior and white sign on the Puritan. Minneapolis Public Library and Minnesota Historical Society collections.

THE STEAMBOAT GEORGE/EXCELSIOR

This is the second in a series of Minnegazette photo stories that look beyond the streetcar boats to explore the other-- and earlier-- steamboats of Lake Minnetonka. The Spring Minnegazette described the three Big Island ferries. Every second or third issue we'll feature one or two boats. The idea is to move back in time.

When Twin City Rapid Transit made its full scale assault on the Lake Minnetonka area in 1905-06, it bought up five of the remaining six large excursion steamboats on the lake. Only the 60 foot *Victor* remained independent. Four of these came from Captain John R. Johnson's Lake Minnetonka Transportation Company. All were named according to a Pilgrim theme, the *Mayflower*, *Plymouth*, *Puritan* and *Priscilla*. The fifth boat was the *Excelsior*, from the W & E Boat Line. Other than the ferries, it was the last really big boat, and the last paddlewheeler, to be built for Lake Minnetonka service.

The *Excelsior* was launched on May 25, 1901 as the *George*, named for its owner George La Paul, who also owned the La Paul House in Excelsior. The

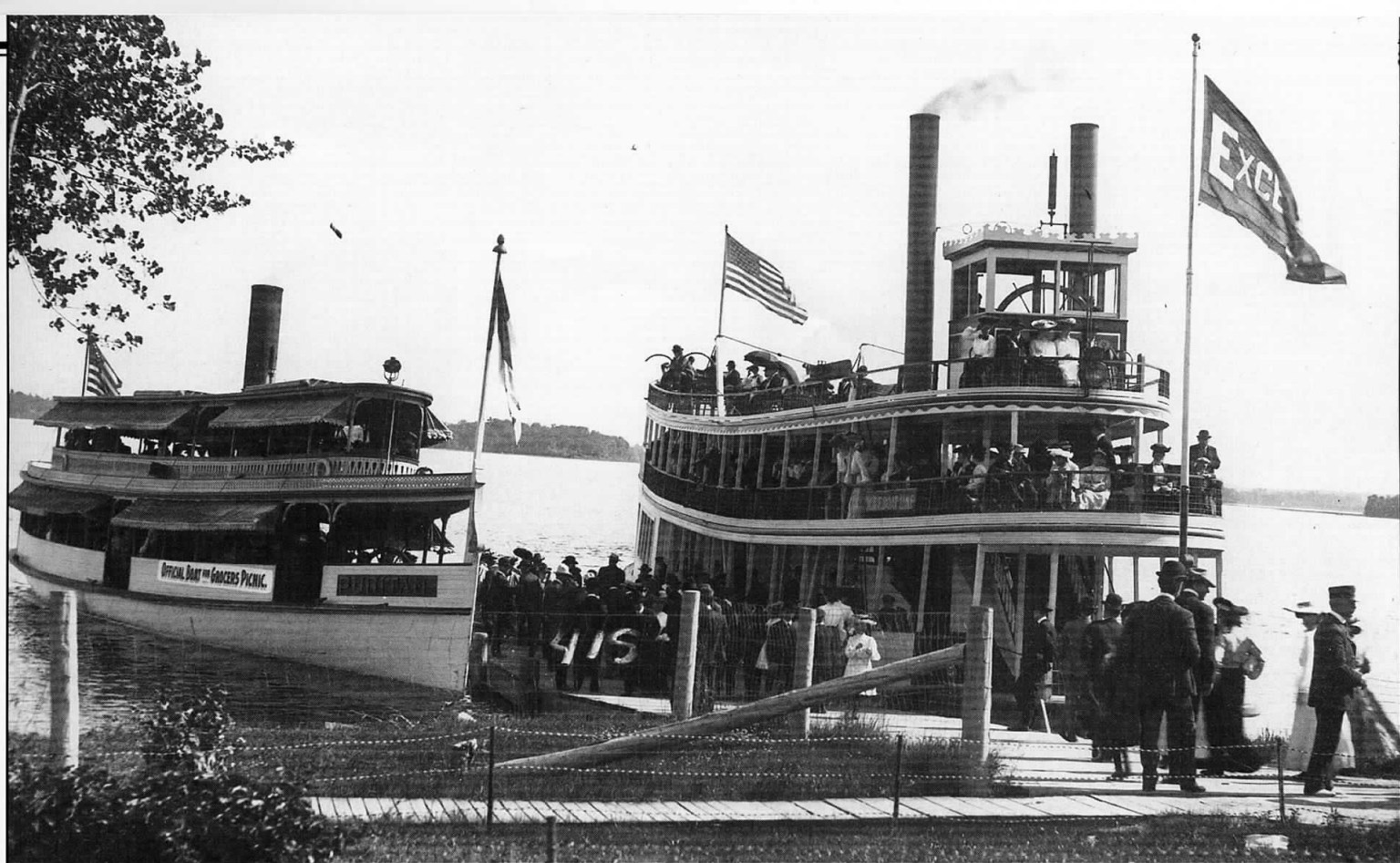
George was 125 feet long, with a capacity of 225 passengers on her three decks. "A Record of Old Boats", published in 1933 and still the primary reference work on Lake Minnetonka steamboats, implies that the *George* was built from Mississippi riverboat components. She certainly looked it, being a sternwheeler with an ornate pilothouse set amidships behind tall twin smokestacks.

Unfortunately, the *George* was about as ugly as a steamboat can get. The semi-enclosed decks gave her an unfinished, slab sided look. Sometime in the next couple of years she was sold to Frank Heywood, owner of the Casino in Excelsior. Heywood rebuilt her to a much more pleasing appearance. A new, smaller pilot house was placed ahead of the stacks and the waist high side panels were removed and replaced with simple iron railings. The bow end of the second and third decks, built flush on the *George*, were stepped back allowing the pilot to actually see the bow. A number of windows were added to the enclosed lower deck stern cabin, opening it up. A second enclosed cabin was built on the deck just above. The overall result was much more pleasing and symmetrical.

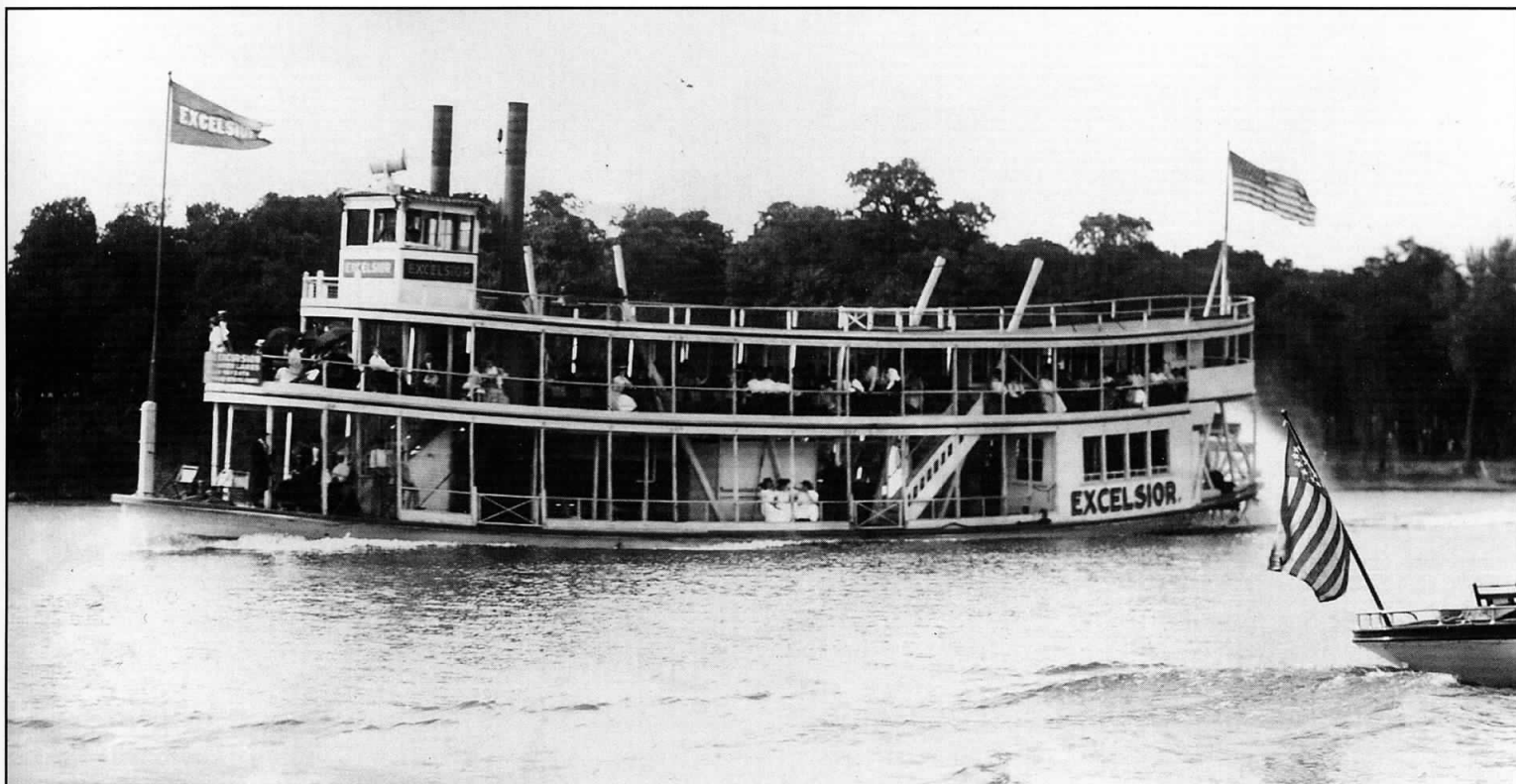
Renamed *Excelsior*, the boat ran under the flag of the W & E Boat Line until TCRT bought it in 1906. Sometime during this period the smokestack mounted whistle, which appears in the photos to be about four feet long, was cut down to a one-foot stub. This must have changed the tone quite a bit. Thereafter the only visible changes are an all white paint job on the pilot house and deck railings, and the addition of a TCRT style metal destination sign on the front of the second deck.

The *Excelsior* spent the next several years in charter and excursion service. Twice daily it made regular three hour, 40 mile tours that covered the lake from Wayzata to Mound, for a fare of 25 cents. Interestingly, a TCRT brochure lists its capacity as 800 passengers, much higher than the *George's* 225.

Excursion boat service ended along with Big Island Park in 1911. The *Excelsior* didn't last that long. She was burned on the lake in 1910. The event was widely advertised and attracted large crowds who rode the streetcars out from Minneapolis. The name *Excelsior* returned in 1915, on the last of the streetcar boats to be built.

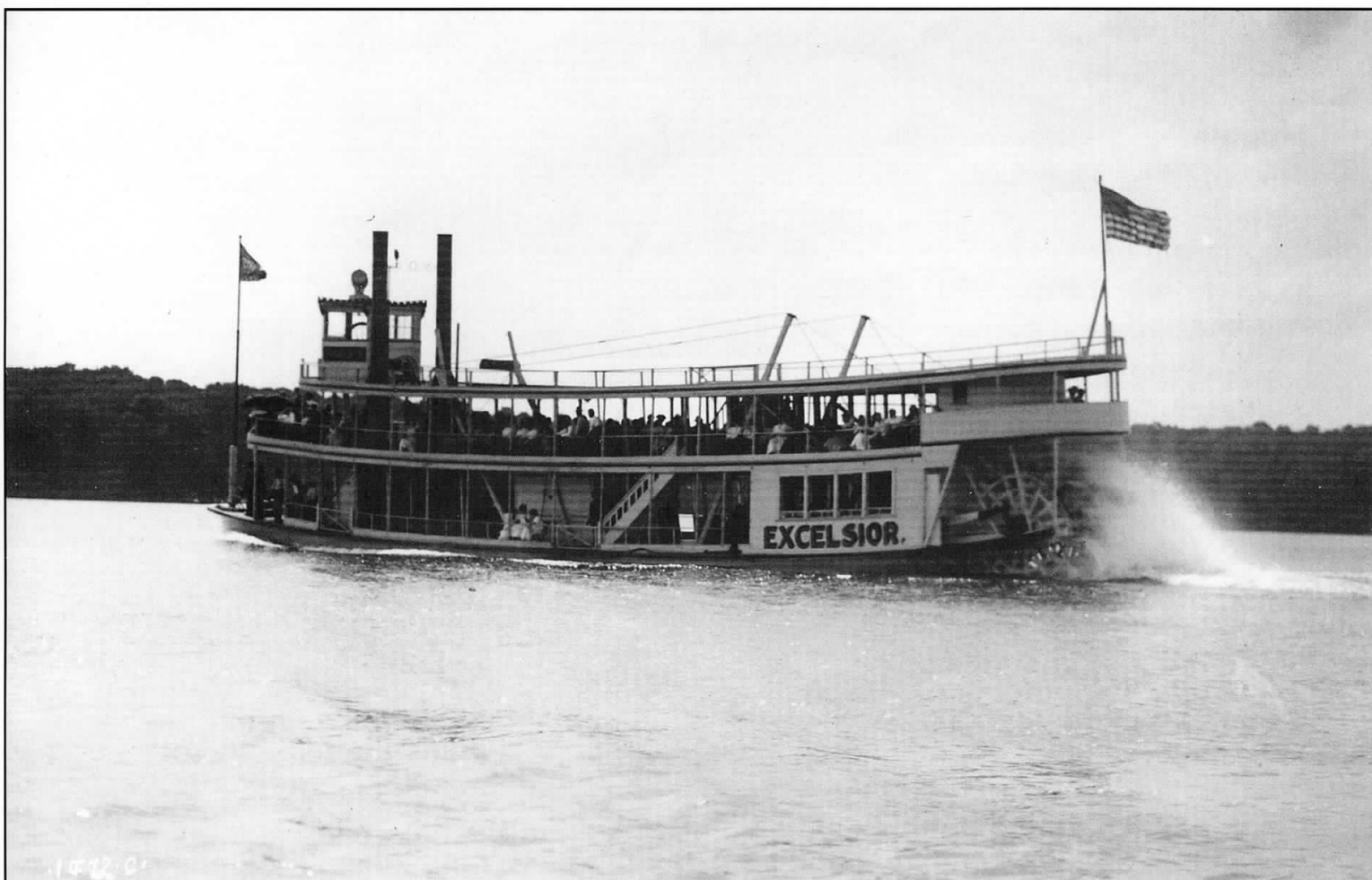






Left: The Excelsior at its namesake port. The side view clearly shows the long truss rods that kept the hull from sagging. Minneapolis Public Library and Minnesota Historical Society collections.

In 1907 commercial photographer Sweet photographed much of the TCRT fleet at speed in mid-lake. These two pictures are part of that series. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



BIG BOAT "BURNING"



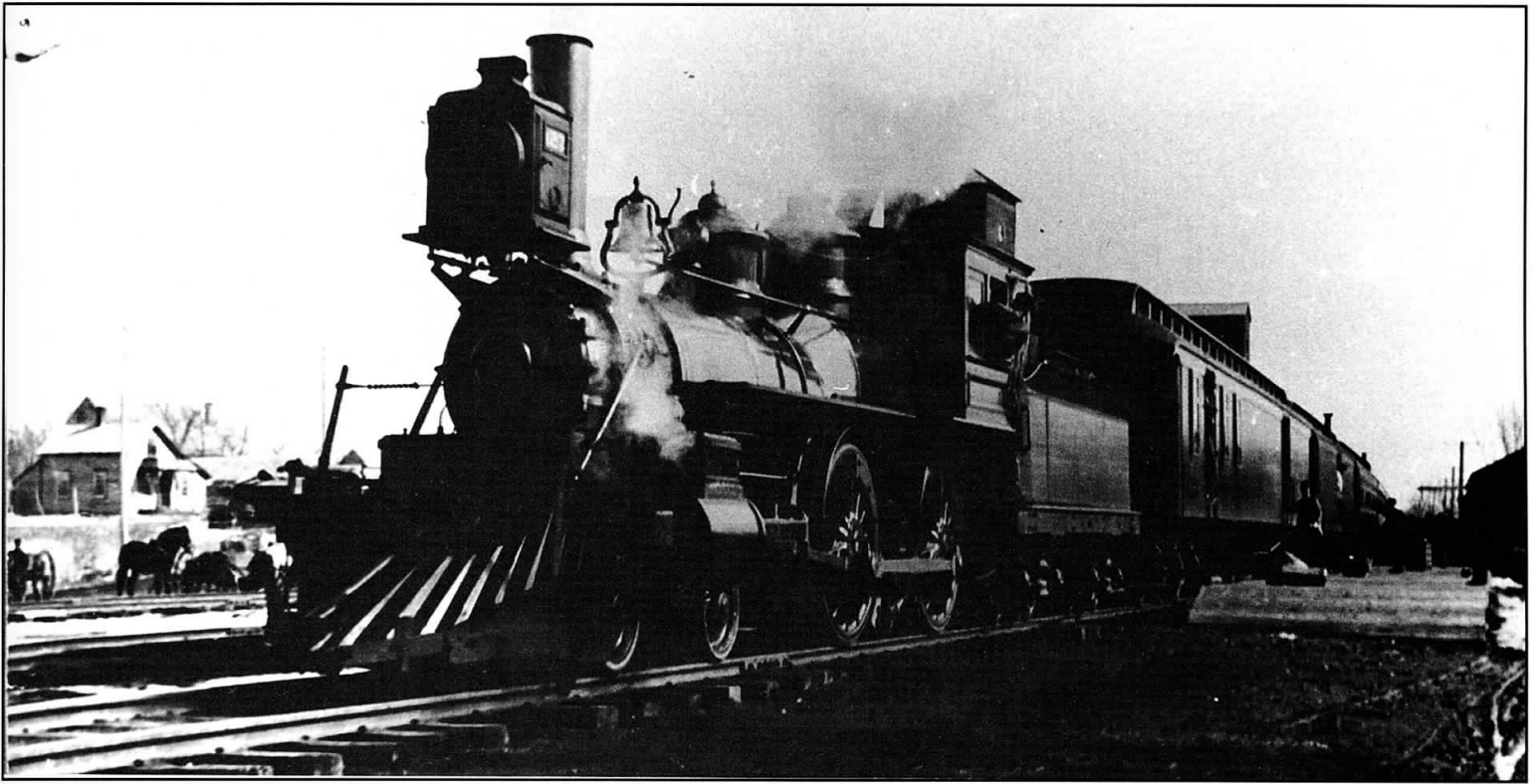
THE "FIRE FIEND" FINISHING THE "EXCELSIOR"

OFF BIG ISLAND PARK, LAKE MINNETONKA
THURSDAY, AUG. 12, 9 P. M.

THE BIG BOAT "EXCELSIOR", which has been put out of commission on Lake Minnetonka, will make a big blaze, and the sight of a "ship on fire at sea" will be worth the trip to the Park.

ELECTRIC TRAINS will leave Minneapolis on August 12 every half-hour up to and including 7:30 P. M. Plenty of Trains and Boats. Round Trip, 50 cents. It isn't every day you can see a big boat go up in smoke.

HALL, BLACK & CO., PRINTERS



COKATO ON THE GREAT NORTHERN

The St. Paul & Pacific built through Cokato, 48 miles west of Minneapolis, in 1869. It was typical of hundreds of small prairie towns. The wood depot was small and unremarkable, and was replaced in 1913 by a larger, 33x100 foot structure.

Over the years the depot would find its way into the occasional photograph, and some of those photos wound up in the files of the Cokato Museum, one of the better small town historical societies. Although assembled quite by

chance, together they give a good feel for the history of this modest place.

The Cokato depot remained an open agency until 1976 and stayed in place until 1985, when it was moved seven miles west to Dassell and became the Old Depot Railroad Museum. You can visit it today. It's open daily from Memorial Day to October 1st, and is filled with railroad displays and memorabilia.



Above: The local calls at the original depot in 1908. All photos Cokato Historical Society collection.

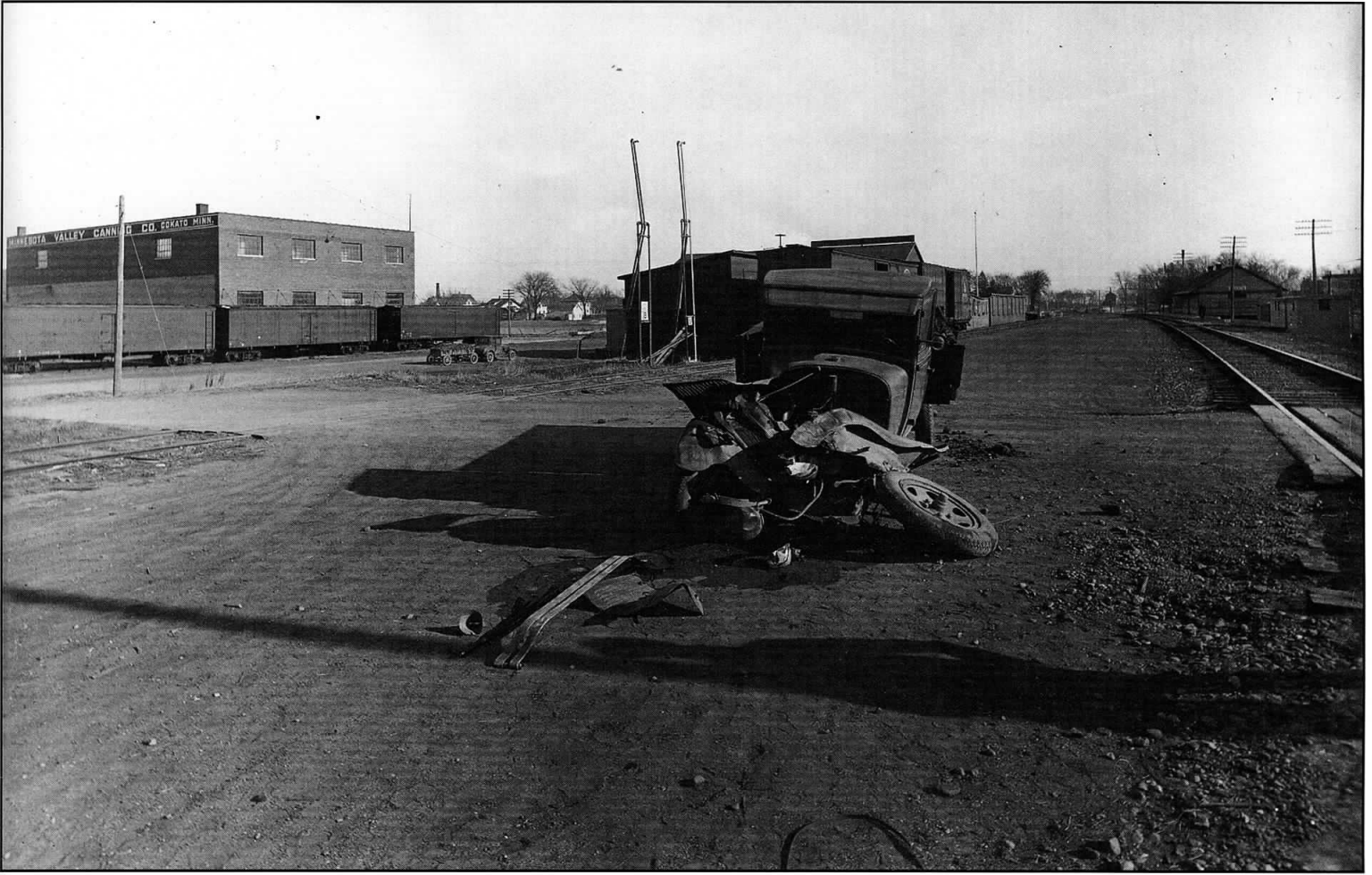
Left: James J. Hill himself came to town in 1912, to donate stained glass windows for the Cokato Baptist Church. He's seated in the right rear of the cutter. Did his visit have something to do with the construction of a new depot the next year?



A group from the Albion Free Church wait for the train to Minneapolis at the original depot about 1911.

The new depot about 1920.

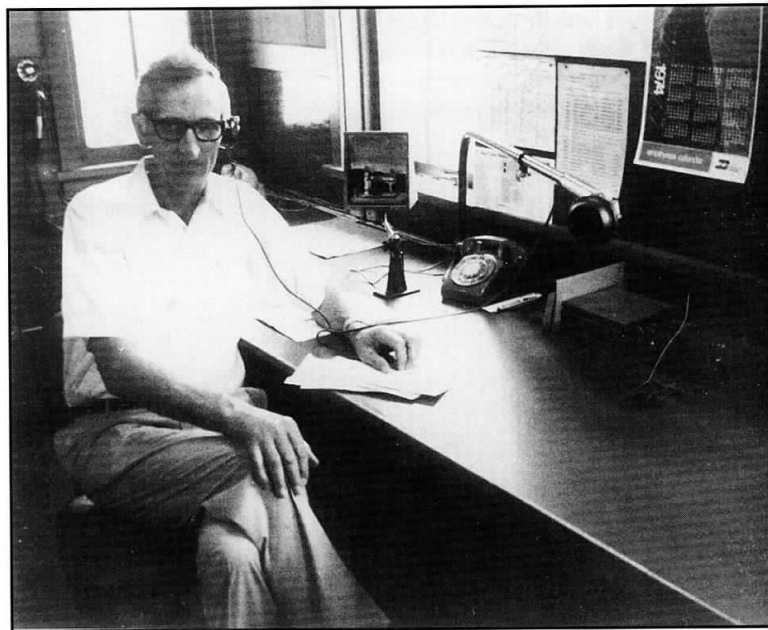




Despite the rather grim circumstances, this mid-1920's view shows the area surrounding the depot prosperous with shippers. Interestingly, the grade elevator has disappeared. Note the old boxcar used as a maintenance of way/speeder shed. Gust Ackerlund Collection, Cokato Museum.

It's about 1930 as a freight passes through. The depot was at the end of the main street, the classic small town layout.





**Adolph Josephson worked on the section between Delano and Litchfield from the 1930's through the 60's.
Waldo Tesch was the last depot agent from 1966-76.**



**In 1955 the RPO clerk on the westbound Fast Mail has just tossed the Cokato bag out the door.
The arrow points to it in the ditch.**

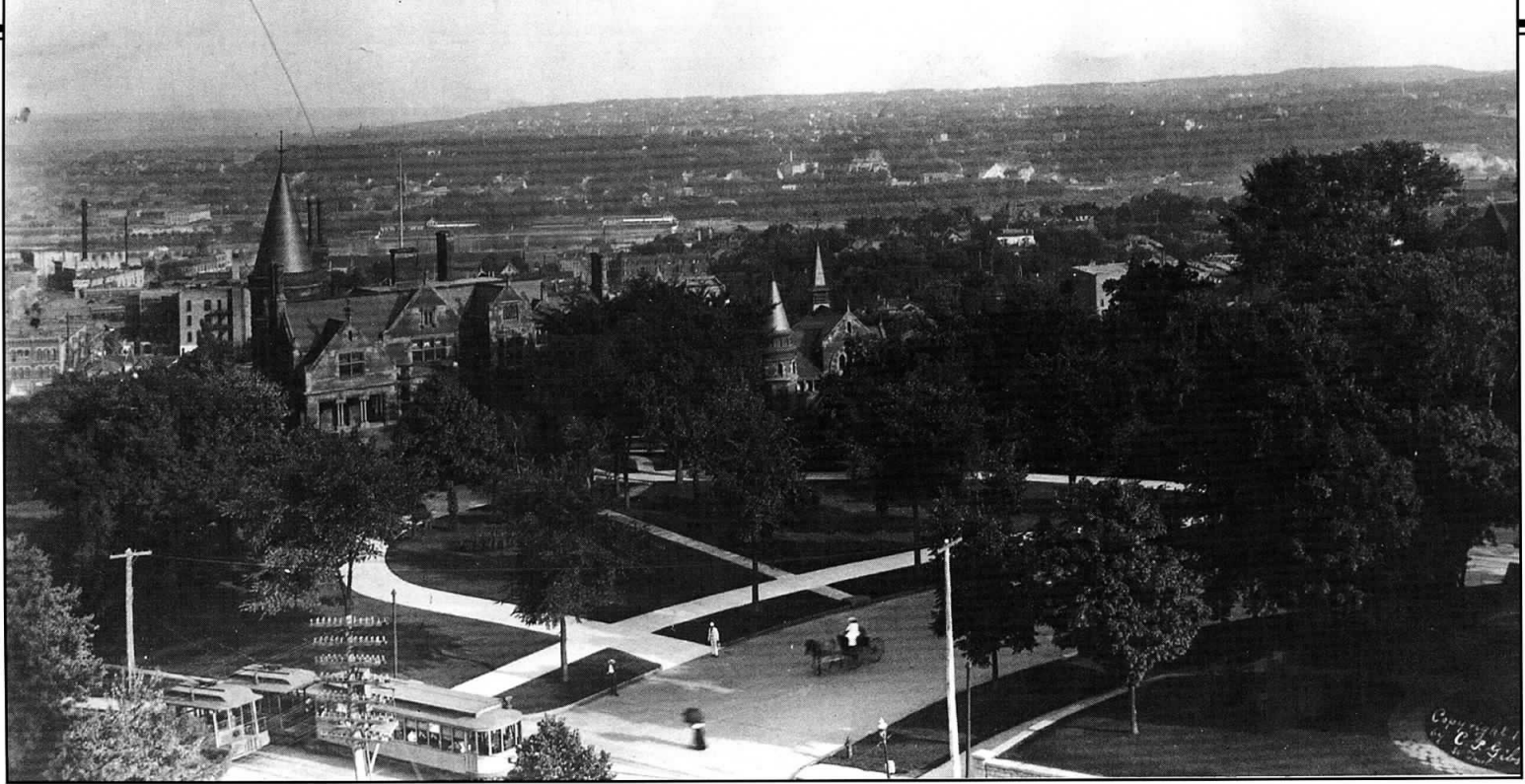




The depot in its final years.

The Cokato depot as it looks today in its new role as the Old Depot Railroad Museum in Dassell. Aaron Isaacs photo.





THE SELBY HILL COUNTERWEIGHT

Electric cars replaced all the horsecars in 1891 and left only the two St. Paul cable car lines as holdouts from the pre-electric era. The East 7th Street line with its 5 percent grade succumbed in 1893. Selby Hill was another matter. The grade was 16 percent, well beyond the limits of adhesion, and so the grip cars persisted until 1898. That was the year TCRT built its first double truck streetcar with capacity to replace a two-car cable train.

Even though the new cars were large and powerful, they had no hope of climbing the hill unassisted, and that was the purpose of the counterweight system. Three former cable cars were rebuilt as pusher cars. Going uphill, they pulled up behind the electric car and engaged a cable that was counterweighted to match the pair of streetcars. Both cars then used their electric motors, plus the force of the counterweight, to climb the hill. Since no coupling was involved, the electric car simply pulled away at the top of the hill.

A downhill electric car eased up against the waiting counterweight car and a small push from their electric motors sent them down the grade, with the counterweight preventing a runaway.

There were double crossovers at both ends of the counterweight, and either track could be used in either direction.

The counterweight system lasted until the 1907 opening of the Selby Tunnel reduced the grade to a manageable 7 percent. The three counterweight cars became shop shifters at Snelling and lasted until the end of operations, curiosities from another century.

This accidental photo of the counterweight was taken from the Kittson mansion, now the site of the St. Paul Cathedral. A streetcar has just been pushed up what would normally be thought of as the downhill track. In fact, the tracks were bi-directional. On the other track a counterweight car waits for an eastbound streetcar to lead down the hill. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

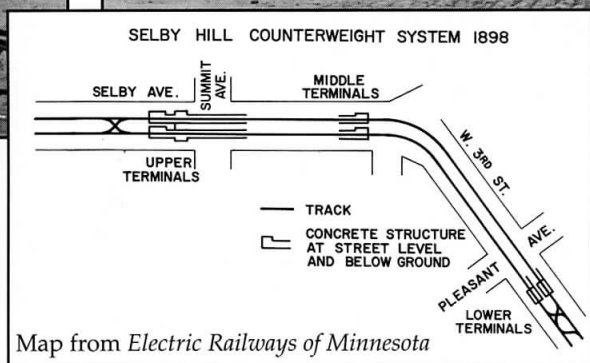
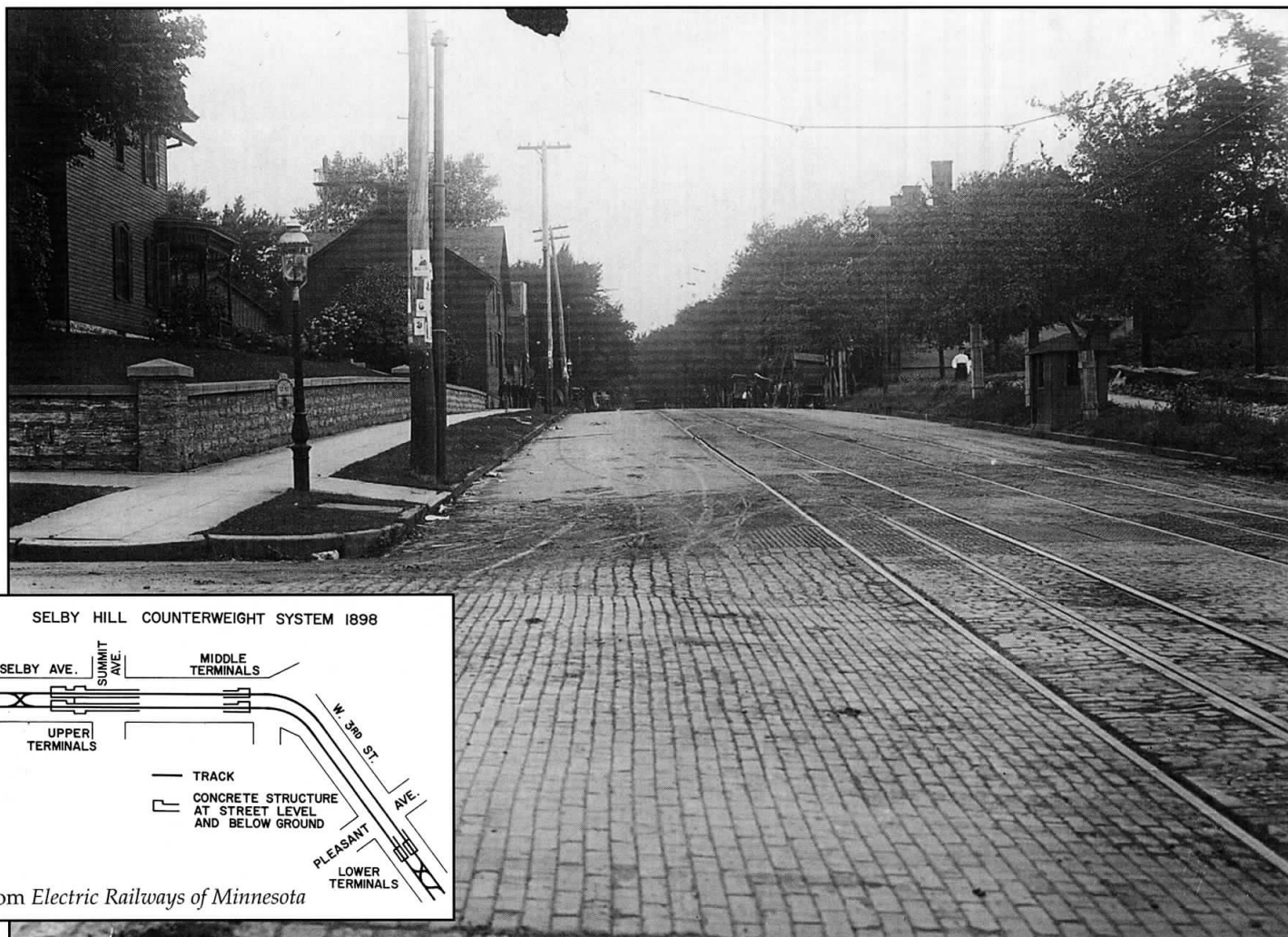


The three counterweight cars were rebuilt from cable cars, probably delivered in 1888. When the counterweight was replaced by the Selby Tunnel, they became shifters or "shifters" at Snelling Shops. #27 lasted until 1952, and #26 and 28 to the end of streetcar operations in 1954. They were by far the oldest equipment on the property. MTM collection.



Above: The bottom of the counterweight at Pleasant Avenue. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Below: The top of the counterweight at Summit Avenue. Hennepin County Historical Society collection.





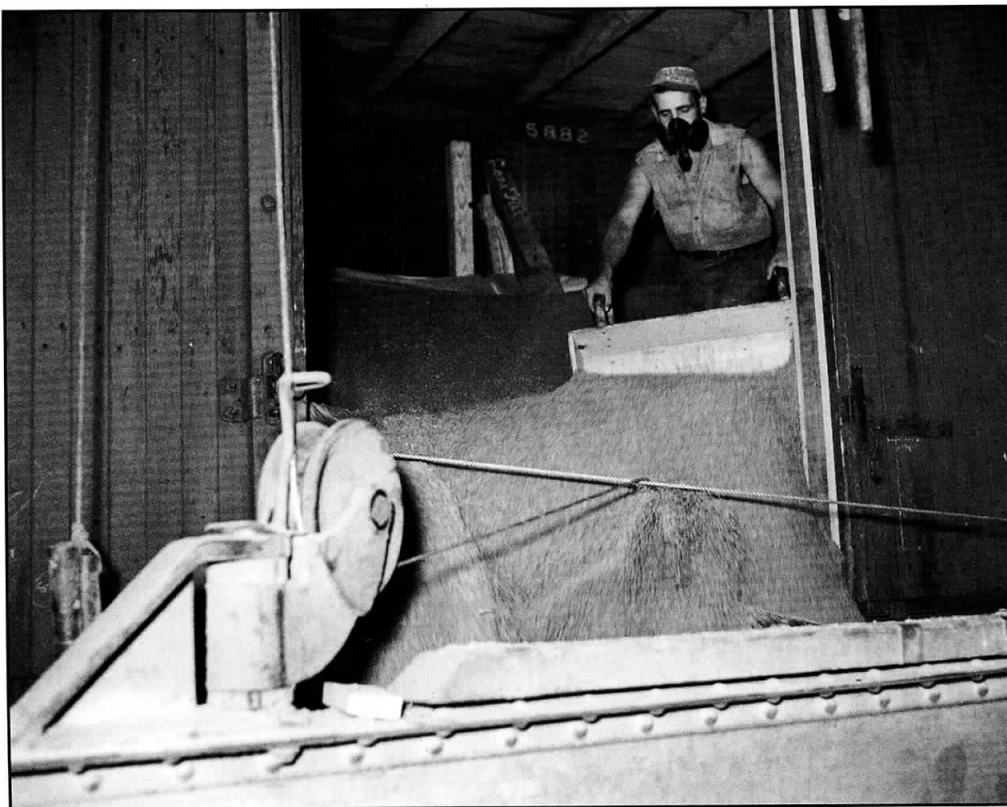
LOADING BOXCARS

-Dave Jasper

The boxcars in the above photo remind me of one summer in college just about the time this photo was taken. That was when it was possible to earn an entire year's tuition at a private college over one summer and even have a little spending money. One of the above minimum wage jobs was loading and unloading those boxcars.

My brother-in-law was an unloader. With a winch, blocks and cable system he man-handled a sort of plow with a flat blade that shoved the grain out the door of the boxcar. It was very dangerous and backbreaking work.

I was a car loader. Sometimes we loaded sacks of milling products in nice clean insulated boxcars. Usually it was gunny sacks of hulls for animal feed. I was the only college student. Most of the others were older and worked off and on, some disappearing after the first paycheck. It was hard work. We ran two wheel hand trucks loaded with



Opposite page top: This photo looks south across Washington Avenue SE, just east of Oak Street and the University of Minnesota, at the Milwaukee Road's southeast Minneapolis branch. Huron Blvd. has been built on the abandoned right of way. David Jasper collection.

five 100 pound sacks. After a couple of weeks I could manage to balance the load and push it along with two fingers, but at first it took every muscle in my body.

The hard part was stacking it inside the car to within a couple of feet of the ceiling. The first load was just leaned in enough to keep it from tipping out. The next load was hand stacked on top of the first load to a height of over seven feet. There was a rhythm of grabbing the sack ears, swinging it out, and boosting it with the right knee enough to get it about shoulder height. With a slight dip we could finish off with a shoving motion to lay the 100 pound sack on top of the seven foot pile. After the first couple of weeks of bone tired exhaustion, I could work eight hours and go dancing in the evening.

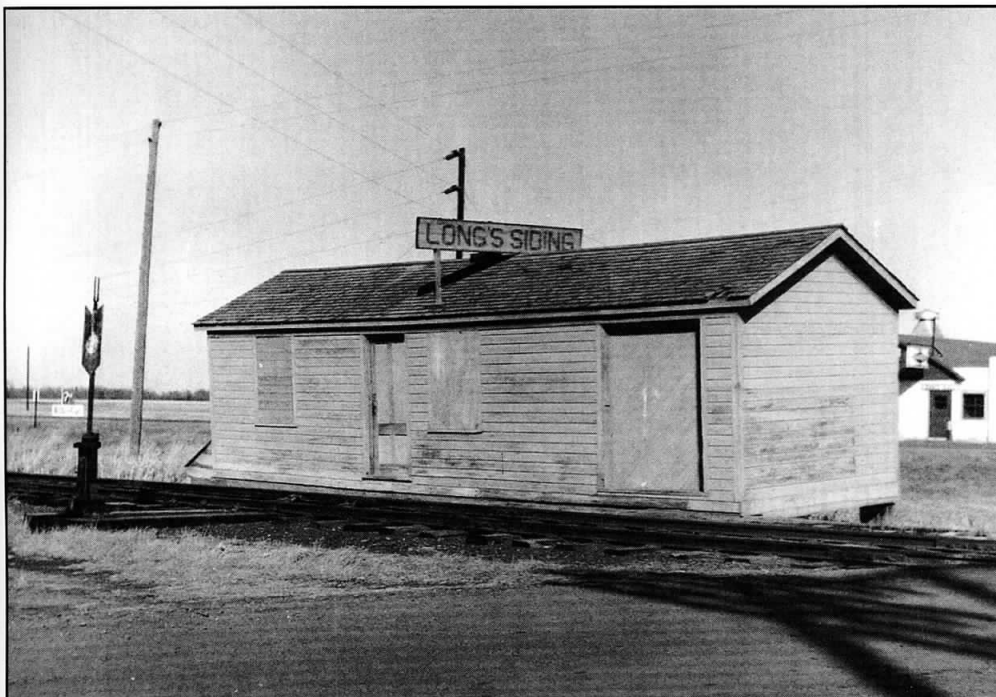
Those were the days when labor was cheap and machines were expensive. A lot has changed in the railroad industry since then.

Opposite page bottom: This grain unloading plow is similar to the one that Dave Jasper refers to. The photo was taken in 1937.

Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Right: This is the fabulous Hotel Lafayette, built in 1882 by James J. Hill to spur traffic on his line along the north shore of Lake Minnetonka. It burned in a spectacular fire in 1897. Today the Lafayette Club stands on the site. Amazingly, the ancient original 60 pound rails laid by Hill still carry the freight traffic of short line Dakota Rail. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



OBSCURE DEPOTS ON PARADE: It's not much of a depot, more like a maintenance of way shed, but then Long's Siding wasn't much of a place. It was located on the Great Northern's Elk River-Milaca line, four miles north of Princeton. MTM collection.



Captain Mann, standing at left, was the long time skipper of the Stillwater and other Lake Minnetonka steamboats. Tom and Mary Mann collection.

The Stillwater accelerates away from a dock, probably after 1920. Note the exterior pipe running up the back, perhaps a turbo generator exhaust. Bill Olsen collection.

Rear cover: In 1937 the Milwaukee Road created this Christmas Light train, seen here on December 21. It was composed of a 4-6-2, coach and bay window caboose. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Minnesota Historical Society collection.



On a bitter December 27, 1938, a switchman carries a broom to clear switch points in the Railway transfer yard on the west bank of the Mississippi near downtown Minneapolis. The grain elevators partially obscured by steam at far left, will soon be demolished. The yard itself is long gone.
Minneapolis Star Tribune photo. Minnesota Historical Society collection.







MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

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